

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL HAMBURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3961

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION BERLIN

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 HAMBURG 1298

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: OCTOBER 3 BUNDESTAG ELECTION - AN ASSESSMENT FROM HAMBURG

1. BEGIN SUMMARY - THE SO-CALLED "HOT PHASE" OF THE BUNDES-
TAG ELECTORAL SAMPAIGN HAS CREATED NOT MUCH LIGHT AND SUR-
PRISINGLY LITTLE HEAT IN THE HAMBURG CONSULAR DISTRICT.
THE RALLYS AND MEETINGS WE HAVE ATTENDED THUS FAR HAVE BEEN
SPARSELY ATTENDED AND THE PARTY BIG WIGS WHO HAVE BEEN
CRISSCROSSING THE AREA HAVE BEGUN TO REPEAT THEMSELVES ON
THE OLD FAMILIAR SAWS OF UNEMPLOYMENT, INFLATION, RADICALISM,
WITHIN THE CIVIL SERVICE, OST-POLITIK AND LAW AND ORDER.
ALTHOUGH WE BELIEVE THE SPD/FDP COALITION WILL SURVIVE IN
BONN, THE RESULT, WE THINK, WILL BE A PHOTO FINISH.

2. AT THIS JUNCTURE THE FOLLOWING ARE OUR PREDICTIONS ABOUT
THE OUTCOME OF THE ELECTION: IN HAMBURG THE FDP WILL
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LOSE 1 SEAT AND THE CDU WILL GAIN 1 SEAT, WITH THE SPD

ALSO LOSING 1 SEAT IF A DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFT IN THE POPULATION HAS OCCURRED, AS WE BELIEVE IT MIGHT HAVE, IN THE PAST FOUR YEARS; IN LOWER SAXONY THE SPD WILL LOSE 4 SEATS, THE FDP WILL LOSE 1 SEAT AND THE CDU WILL GAIN 5 SEATS; AND IN SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN THE SPD WILL LOSE 2 SEATS AND THE CDU WILL GAIN 2 SEATS. THE FOLLOWING ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION IN EACH OF OUR LAENDER WILL, WE HOPE, SUPPORT THESE PREDICTIONS OUTLINED AS WELL IN THE COMPARATIVE CHART AT THE END OF THIS REPORT. END SUMMARY

3. THE SERIOUS STRAINS WITHIN THE HAMBURG SPD/FDP COALITION GOVERNMENT, WHICH WE HAVE BEEN REPORTING FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS, CONTINUE UNABATED AND STILL THREATEN TO SPLIT THE PARTIES INTO SEPARATE ANTAGONISTIC CAMPS. THE EARLIER CAMARADERIE BETWEEN THE PARTNERS NO LONGER EXISTS AND BITTERNESS AND RANCOR HAVE SOURED THE PERSONAL RELATIONS OF SPD FIRST MAYOR, HANS-ULRICH KLOSE, AND THE FDP SECOND MAYOR, DIETER BIALLAS. THE BLAME FOR THE DIVISIVENESS MUST BE BORNE ALMOST ENTIRELY BY BIALLAS AND THE FDP BLOCK IN THE STATE ASSEMBLY, WHOSE INFLEXIBILITY AND STRIDENT RADICALISM ARE NO LONGER TOLERATED BY THE SPD LEADERSHIP WITH ITS EARLIER GOOD GRACE AND PATIENCE.

4. THE PRINCIPAL ISSUE DIVIDING THE PARTIES INVOLVES THE EMPLOYMENT OF RADICALS IN THE HAMBURG CIVIL SERVICE. THE FDP HAS ADVOCATED THAT THERE BE NO BAR TO THE EMPLOYMENT OF COMMUNIST TEACHERS IN THE HAMBURG PRIMARY SCHOOL SYSTEM. THE SDP HAS BEEN ADAMANTLY OPPOSED TO THIS AND HAS PUBLICLY CRITICISED ITS JUNIOR PARTNER'S POSITION AS A QUIXOTIC TOLERANCE OF ANTI-DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL ELEMENTS WHICH, IF FOLLOWED TO ITS LOGICAL CONCLUSION, COULD LEAD TO A SUBVERSION OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM BY LEFTIST RADICALS.

5. WATCHING THE INTRA-COALITION SCHISM DEVELOP FROM THE SIDELINES, THE CDU HOPES, OF COURSE, THAT THE COALITION IN HAMBURG IS DYING AND WHILE THIS MAY BE AN UNDERSTANDABLE BIT OF SELF-DELUSION ON THE PART OF THE CDU

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DURING THIS POLITICAL CAMPAIGN, NVERTHELESS, THERE ARE A NUMBER OF INFLUENTIAL SPD LEADERS, INCLUDING MAYOR KLOSE AND OSWALD RAULIG, CHAIRMAN OF THE PARTY IN HAMBURG WHO BELIEVE THAT THE SPD MAY HAVE TO JETTISON ITS RADICAL JUNIOR PARTNER IN THE 1978 STATE ASSEMBLY ELECTION IF IT IS TO AVOID BEING TARRED WITH THE BRUSH OF RADICALISM HERE.

6. CLEARLY THE FISSURES WITHIN THE SPD/FDP COALITION HAVE BADLY WEAKENED THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT. IT WILL SUFFER, WE BELIEVE, LOSSES AT THE POLLS ON OCTOBER 3 - THE FDP MORE SO BECAUSE OF ITS RADICALISM. THE LATTER WILL LOSE, WE THINK, ONE OF ITS TWO SEATS AND, IF A DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFT IN THE POPULATION TO LOWER SAXONY OR TO SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN HAS TAKEN PLACE, THEN WE THINK THE SPD WILL ALSO LOSE ONE OF ITS NINE SEATS. THE CDU, WE BELIEVE, WILL GAIN AN ADDITIONAL SEAT IN THIS ELECTION.

LOWER SAXONY

7. THE MOOD OF THE CDU IN LOWER SAXONY IS ONE OF CONFIDENCE ABOUT ITS ABILITY TO WIN BACK THE LEAD IT LOST TO THE SPD IN THE NUMBER OF DEPUTIES THE PARTIES SENT TO THE BUNDESTAG IN THE 1972 ELECTION. SO CONFIDENT, IN FACT, THAT WILFRIED HASSELMANN, MINISTER FOR BUNDESRAT AFFAIRS, HAS URGED HELMUT KOHL TO REFRAIN FROM ANY ADDITIONAL PUBLIC UTTERANCES OFFERING THE FDP A JUNIOR PARTNERSHIP IN A CDU/FDP COALITION GOVERNMENT IF THE CDU WERE TO WIN A SLIGHT MAJORITY ON OCTOBER 3. THE DRAMATIC ELECTORAL VICTORY OF ERNST ALBRECHT AS MINISTER-PRESIDENT ON FEBRUARY 6 AND THE SUBSEQUENT VOTE FOR THE RATIFICATION OF THE POLISH AGREEMENTS BY LOWER SAXONY IN THE BUNDESRAT HAVE SET IN PLAY A MOMENTUM WHICH WE THINK WILL CARRY THE DAY FOR THE CDU IN THE STATE A MONTH FROM NOW.

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FM AMCONSUL HAMBURG

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8. ANOTHER FAVORABLE OMEN FOR THE CDU IN THE ELECTION HAS BEEN THE HAMLET-LIKE STANCE OF THE FDP OVER ITS FUTURE AS A POSSIBLE COALITION PARTNER - PROVINCIAL OR NATIONAL - OF THE SPD OR THE CDU. ROETGER GROSS, CHAIRMAN OF THE FDP PARTY BOARD IN THE STATE, CONTINUES TO SUPPORT THE CONCEPT OF A LOOSE ALLIANCE WITH THE SPD AND HAS ADAMANTLY OPPOSED ANY SUGGESTION THAT THE PARTY DISSOLVE ITS POLITICAL MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE WITH THE SPD IN THE LANDTAG AND JOIN FORCES WITH THE CDU IN A COALITION GOVERNMENT IN HANNOVER. NEVERTHELESS, THE PRESSURE IS THERE AND IS GROWING WITHIN A CONSERVATIVE ELEMENT OF THE PROVINCIAL PARTY TO SHIFT ITS ALLEGIANCE TO THE CDU. THIS STRAIN HAS UNDERMINED PARTY STRENGTH AND WILL CAUSE IT, WE BELIEVE, TO LOSE A SEAT IN THE ELCTION.

9. SINCE THE RESIGNATION OF BRANDT IN MAY 1974 THERE
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HAS BEEN A SUBTLE SWING OF THE PENDULUM IN LOWER SAXONY AWAY FROM THE MORE ABSTRACT PHILOSOPHY OF THE SPD TOWARD A MORE PRAGMATIC APPROACH TO PARTY GOALS. IN THE PROCESS THE LEFT-TINGED PARTY IDEOLOGUES HAVE FALLEN BY THE WAYSIDE AND HAVE BEEN EDGED OUT OF THEIR FORMER POSITIONS OF INFLUENCE WITHIN PARTY COUNCILS BY THE MORE PRACTICAL AND FLEXIBLE SPD POLITICIANS OF THE SCHMIDT HUE WHO NOW DETERMINE PARTY POLICY IN THE STATE. NEVERTHELESS, THE ANTAGONISMS BETWEEN THE LEFT AND THE RIGHT WINGS OF THE PARTY REMAIN AND THE DIFFERENCES PERSONIFIED BY PROFESSOR PETER VON OERTZEN, CHAIRMAN OF THE PARTY IN THE STATE AND BERNARD KREIBOHM, SPD FLOOR LEADER IN THE LANDTAG, PARTICULARLY OVER EDUCATIONAL REFORM LEGISLATION HAS BADLY SHATTERED PARTY UNITY, WHICH WILL, WE BELIEVE, CAUSE IT TO LOSE HEAVILY AT THE POLLS.

10. THE CDUE IS LOADED FOR BEAR IN THIS ELECTION. BEOYED BY ITS STUNNING UPSET OF THE SPD/FDP IN FEBRUARY 1976 AND THE DRAMATIC ELECTORAL VICTORY OF ALBRECHT AS MINISTER-

PRESIDENT WE BELIEVE THE CDU WILL WIN FIVE ADDITIONAL SEATS IN THE BUNDESTAG AND THAT THE SPD AND THE FDP WILL LOSE FOUR AND ONE SEATS RESPECTIVELY IN THE OCTOBER 3 ELECTION.

SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN

11. IN HIS STUMPING AROUND THE STATE MINISTER-PRESIDENT GERHARD STOLTENBERG HAS BEEN STRESSING THE EFFORTS OF HIS CDU ADMINISTRATION TO ATTRACT NEW INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENT TO SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN AND TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE LAND. NORBERT GANSEL, THE MOST PROMINENT SPD CANDIDATE SEEKING RE-ELECTION, AND WERNER ZYWIETZ, WHO IS HADING THE FDP LAND LIST IN THE STATE, HAVE BEEN ATTACKING THE CDU PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT FOR WHAT THEY ALLEGE TO BE THE CDU'S UNWILLINGNESS TO SUPPORT THE BONN COALITION GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REFORM IN SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THEIR CRITICISM WILL, HOWEVER, HAVE ANY AFFECT ON THE THUS FAR UNCOMMITTED VOTER BECAUSE, PRIVATELY, AT LEAST, MANY MODERATE MEMBERS OF THE SPD
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AND THE FDP, WITH WHOM WE HAVE DISCUSSED THE ELECTION, HAVE A GRUDGING RESPECT FOR THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE STOLTENBERG ADMINISTRATION AND CONCEDE THAT STOLTENBERG HAS BEEN AN EFFECTIVE, HONEST AND POPULAR LEADER OF HIS PARTY IN KIEL.

12. THE FDP IN SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN HAS PROVEN ITS ABILITY TO SURVIVE. IN THE 1975 LANDTAG ELECTIONS IT ONCE AGAIN CROSSED THE 5 PERCENT ELECTORAL THRESHOLD TO RESTORE THE PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION IT LOST IN THE BUNDESTAG ELECTION FOUR YEARS EARLIER. UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF UWE RONNEBURGER, THE PARTY HAS VOTED INDEPENDENTLY IN THE LANDTAG AND HAS DECLINED TO PLAY THE ROLE OF A COMPLAISANT JUNIOR PARTNER OF THE SPD. THIS INDEPENDENCE AND THE PARTY'S CLEARLY DEFINED LIBERAL CHARACTER IN SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN, WILL, WE BELIEVE, ASSURE IT OF RETURNING ITS TWO DEPUTIES TO THE BUNDESTAG.

13. THE SPD IN SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN IS RENT WITH DISSENSION. TWO IRRECONCILABLE GROUPS, EACH CLAIMING THE OTHER TO BE AN APOSTATE OF SOCIALISM, EXISTS SIDE BY SIDE WITHIN THE STATE PARTY STRUCTURE. ONE, A LARGE, RELATIVELY CONSERVATIVE, AMORPHOUS AND LEADERLESS FACTION WITHOUT, HOWEVER, MUCH INFLUENCE IN PARTY COUNCILS AND THE OTHER, A CLASS CONSCIOUS GROUP OF PARTY INTELLECTUALS LED BY "RED JOCHEN" STEFFEN AND

HIS PHILOSOPHIC ACOLYTES, LAND CHAIRMAN GUENTHER JANSEN AND LANDTAG FLOOR LEADER KLAUS MATTHIESEN. THE SCHISM CAUSED BY THE DOGMATIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO WINGS HAS WEAKENED THE PARTY AND WILL CAUSE IT, WE BELIEVE, TO LOSE VOTES IN THE COMING ELECTION.

14. FOLLOWING THE CHANGE IN SPD NATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN MAY 1974 FROM WILLY BRANDT TO HELMUT SCHMIDT, WE BEGAN TO OBSERVE IN OUR CONSULAR DISTRICT, A SUBTLE SWING OF THE PENDULUM IN HAMBURG AND LOWER SAXONY AWAY FROM ABSTRACT SOCIALIST PHILOSOPHY TOWARD A MORE PRAGMATIC APPROACH TO SPD POLITICAL GOALS. NOT SO IN SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN. HERE THE PARTY LEADERS HAVE NEITHER

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FM AMCONSUL HAMBURG
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MELLOWED WITH AGE NOR HAVE THEY ATTEMPTED IN RECENT YEARS TO SEEK COALITION ARRANGEMENTS WITH A GRADUALLY STRENGTHENING FDP TO TOPPLE THE STOLTENBERG GOVERNMENT. ON THE CONTRARY, THE SPD HAS MAINTAINED ITS DISTANCE FROM THE FDP IN SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN AND HAS EVEN OPENLY

CRITICIZED THE SPD IN HAMBURG FOR HAVING ACCOMMODATED ITSELF OVER THE YEARS TO THE LIBERAL WAYS OF THE BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENT IN THE HAMBURG CITY-STATE. IN SHORT THE SPD IN SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN HAS NEVER SOUGHT TO TEMPER ITS RADICAL IDEOLOGY TO ATTRACT MODERATE VOTERS OR TO COMPROMISE ITS DOCTRINAIRE VIEWS SO AS TO MAKE ITSELF A POTENTIALLY ACCEPTABLE COALITION PARTNER OF THE FDP. THE PARTY HAS FOLLOWED A SINGLE-MINDED IDEOLOGY IN SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN, INDEPENDENT OF SPD NATIONAL DIRECTION AND ALMOST INDIFFERENT TO THE PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY WHICH HAS GUIDED THE PARTY UNDER HELMUT SCHMIDT.

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15. DEFECTIONS WHICH TOOK PLACE IN VARIOUS TOWNS THROUGHOUT THE STATE SEVERAL YEARS AGO BECAUSE OF STEFFEN'S VIEWS ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROGRAMS CONTINUE TO PLAGUE THE PARTY TODAY UNDER THE EQUALLY MILITANT AND RADICAL LEADERSHIP OF MATTHIESEN. BOTH MATTHIESEN AND JANSEN ADVOCATE CONTROL OF PRIVATE INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENT, COMPULSORY FINANCIAL SUPPORT BY BUNDESBANK, OF STATE AND FEDERAL ECONOMIC POLICIES AND SOCIALIZATION OF BANKS AND INSURANCE COMPANIES. ESPOUSING THESE POLICIES AND CONTINUING TO SPEAK IN 19TH CENTURY CLASS WARFARE JARGON, THE STRIDENT SPD WILL, WE BELIEVE, LOSE A SIZEABLE ELECTORAL SUPPORT IN THE OCTOBER 3 ELECTION AND WE PREDICT THAT THE OUTCOME WILL DEPRIVE IT OF TWO OF ITS SEATS IN THE BUNDESTAG.

CONCLUSION

16. COMPARED WITH THE RESULTS OF THE 1972 BUNDESTAG ELECTION IN THE HAMBURG CONSULAR DISTRICT, WE THEREFORE PREDICT THAT THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTION OF OCTOBER 3 WILL SHOW THE FOLLOWING CHANGES IN OUR THREE LAENDER:

PREDICTION
1972 1976
BUNDESTAG ELECTION BUNDESTAG ELECTION

	SPD	CDU	FDP	SPD	CDU	FDP
HAMBURG	9	5	2	9	6	1
LOWER SAXONY	30	27	5	26	32	4
SCHLESWIG-HOL.	11	9	2	9	11	2
BROGAN						

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